



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Councilmember George Leventhal

For Immediate Release

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**STATEMENT OF COUNCILMEMBER GEORGE LEVENTHAL
ON THE INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION
REGARDING COUNTY ENERGY POLICY**

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Thank you for being here. People have asked me: Why is it so important that Montgomery County procure its energy from wind power? I reply with two words: Clean Air.

We are under the gun to comply with the Clean Air Act. Our region is a severe non-attainment area, and if we are not able to reduce the amount of pollutants that are emitted into the air, we could lose all our federal transportation funds in 2004. Diversifying our sources of power is just one of the creative methods that we can use to reduce air pollution.

The resolution that I am introducing today, along with the unanimous co-sponsorship of my County Council colleagues, and with the strong support of County Executive Doug Duncan, will accomplish the following:

1. It will amend the county's energy policy to provide that at least 5% of the electricity that we purchase originates from clean (non-polluting), renewable sources. Our first step in this direction will be to purchase electricity resulting from wind turbines. In the future, we may want to purchase a larger amount of clean, renewable energy, and we may want to purchase it from other sources, such as solar power. But this figure represents a good start that will ensure that we can meet our energy needs at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers.
2. It will establish an "Energy Wise Offices" program in county government that will promote energy conservation. The savings from this program should amount to more than we spend on the additional cost of wind power. (more...)

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3. To identify additional potential savings, it will authorize the hiring of outside energy efficiency experts to perform audits on three county office buildings that are large users of electricity.

I am excited that Montgomery County, Maryland will be on the leading edge, but I am confident that other local governments, and large energy buyers in the private sector and the non-profit sector, will also be following our lead. I am so pleased to have the support of my colleagues for this groundbreaking initiative, and very happy to be able now to introduce our next speaker. County Executive Doug Duncan made his staff available to work with me on this initiative; he has been fully supportive from our first conversation on this topic; and I know that he understands the importance of clean air, clean water and a healthy environment.

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